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The author's discriminating account of the varied elements which make up the population, the differences in speech and manners, work and pleasures which these entail, will be read with pleasure and profit. A slight sketch of Italian history and art round out the completeness of this volume.

While the translator has in the main done justice to the author, he must be censured for many awkward sentences, for faulty punctuation, and for numerous errors due, evidently, to careless proofreading. Thus the omission of a cipher in the statement of the capacity of the Coliseum reduces it to about the size of the Mormon Tabernacle; Monte Mario masquerades as Monte *Maria*; the genitive of Nerva is written *Nerviae*, possibly to conform to *Trajani* and *Augusti*, which precede it; *east* and *west* are several times confused, and there is more than one instance where reference is made to a wrong page. The familiar line of Horace is printed on p. 387: *Vides ut alte stet nive candidum.* It is useless to speculate on who is to blame for the remarkable use of the apostrophe in the title on the cover. The printer's devil does not work in refined gold or he might be the scapegoat; perhaps, as the book bears the imprint of a London house, it is an Anglicism not current in America.

The latter half of the volume abounds in full-page illustrations, many of which are printed from recent cuts and are clear and satisfactory, and the numerous sketch maps in the last chapter do good service in expounding the text. There is a good index, some interesting tables of statistics, and an excellent summary of the essentials the author has tried to emphasize. The book deserves to win a place as a valuable all-round authority on Italy.

C. W. H.

Vorläufiger Bericht über eine in den Jahren 1902 and 1903 aus geführte Forschungsreise in den zentralen Tian-Schan. Von Dr. Gottfried Merzbacher. Gotha, Justus Perthes. 1904. (P. M. E. Nr. 149.)

The author's explorations in the Central Tian-Shan have enriched our knowledge of that region with a considerable number of most important facts. In the first place must be mentioned his search for the Khan Tengri Mountain, which has resulted in his ascertaining, for the first time, the actual location of the dominating peak of the Tian-Shan. It differs quite considerably from that assumed by former visitors of the country, and even from the data of the official Russian 40-verst survey map. The author's experiences in trying to get near the mountain furnish in themselves the best explanation why such an important question could remain undecided so long. The peak of Khan Tengri, even in an environment of other peaks about 20,000 feet high, rises so high above all of them (about 3,000 feet) that its characteristic outline appears at the background of almost every valley or glacier in that region, and seems to be the culminating-point of each succeeding range of mountains which one approaches. The author realized that only one who had actually stood at the base of the mountain would be able to say where it is, and therefore resolved to use the means of Alpine sport for the service of science, and, with two Tyrolese guides, climbed over one range after the other, and across one glacier after the other, until the goal was reached. The story of this search for the enchanted mountain which seems to be everywhere and nowhere is one of the most fascinating chapters of geographic exploration. It was found that Khan Tengri is not, as has generally been supposed, the central knot from which the ranges of central Tian-Shan radiate. It rises from a secondary ridge which branches off from the main range at about the place

where the 40-verst map located it. There is an imposing mountain at this place, which faces the valley with an almost vertical wall of marble, about 6,000 feet high; but it is not Khan Tengri. The author named it Nicolai Michaelowich in honour of the Russian Grand Duke and President of the Imperial Geographic Society of Russia, who has given so much help and encouragement to the exploration of Central Asia. Khan Tengri, however, while visible back of almost every valley and glacier, as stated above, has its actual basis at the upper end of the Inyltshek Valley and glacier, one of the great longitudinal valleys of the Central Tian-Shan, which opens into the Sarydshas Valley. This glacier, from 65 to 70 versts long, is one of the largest of Central Tian-Shan, and is divided into a northern and a southern branch by the ridge which culminates in the white pyramid of Khan Tengri. The two glaciers in the parallel valleys north of it, the Semenow and Mushketow glaciers, are in no way connected with it. It is from the Inyltshek Valley that an ascent must be made, if it can be made at all, for the snow in the highest part of that region was found to be almost impassable. The climate is so dry that the snow is loose, like sand, and the insolation is not strong enough to start regelation. Névé is hardly ever formed, therefore, and beyond a certain height the fields of loose snow seem to forbid the attempts even of trained Alpinists.

The lack of relation between the general structure of the ranges and the distribution of the highest peaks, of which Khan Tengri is an example, seems to be typical for the Central Tian-Shan; in this, as in many other respects, it differs very distinctly from the Alps, whose principal peaks rise at the crossings of the principal chains. Geologically, the pyramid of Khan Tengri consists entirely of rocks of sedimentary origin; granites, gneisses, and crystalline schists having been found nowhere in the Central Tian-Shan. In the Khan Tengri region, as elsewhere in that neighbourhood, granites and metamorphic rocks do not constitute the central ranges, as they do in the Alps; these ranges consist entirely of limestones, marbles, slates, with occasional intrusions of basic rock, mostly diabase. A band of black diabase, for instance, runs all around the white marble pyramid of Khan Tengri, adding greatly to the beauty of its appearance. The dip of the strata, which is northerly in the ranges north and southerly in those south of Khan Tengri seems to indicate that the mountain itself is a remnant of an old anticline which was broken by dislocations along its periphery and of which the centre alone has remained standing. The generally parallel structure of the ranges of the central Tian-Shan, as observed by others before him, has been confirmed by Dr. Merzbacher's observations; his geologist further succeeded in defining the age of the peripheral ranges north and south as Lower and Upper Carboniferous, respectively, and the valley formations as Tertiary.

The travels of the author along the southern foot of the Tian-Shan enabled him to correct another erroneous geographic tradition. He found that the southern slope of the mountains toward the Tarim Basin is not at all abrupt and "wall-like," as had been supposed by most geographers, but that steep slopes, wherever they do exist, are the exception rather than the rule. In general, the parallel chains of the Tian-Shan slope quite gradually toward the plain, each following range being lower than the preceding one, and the transverse ridges adapt themselves to their grades. That erroneous impression can have arisen only, according to the author, by the prevailing haziness of the atmosphere, which is very apt to create exaggerated impressions of vertical elevation, together with the sharp sunlight of the steppe, which also has a deceptive influence in this respect. As he traversed the country early in spring, at a time when neither of

these influences was developed to any extent, he was able to get more accurate impressions than his predecessors, all of whom visited that region later in the year.

Finally, he ascertained that the lower course of the Sarydshas River, which collects the waters of the central Tian-Shan toward the Tarim River, is not identical with the river coming down through the Dshanart Valley, as had been supposed, but that it corresponds to the river known to the natives as Kum Arik (channel of the desert), which breaks through the parallel ranges in a deep transverse valley, so narrow as to be absolutely inaccessible when the river carries the full amount of water. As this is the case throughout the warm season, the river being supplied by all the glaciers of the central Tian-Shan, only a mid-winter expedition would be able to enter that valley and trace it up to the explored parts of the Sarydshas course.

The study of glaciers and valleys also formed an important part of the programme. Like others before him, the author found evidences of an extensive glaciation everywhere. The present glaciers seem almost stationary, since the large supply of snow from the highest regions will replace any amount of loss due to melting at the base of the glacier; only on the Mushketow glacier were slight traces of recession noticeable. A peculiar feature of all the glaciers in the neighbourhood of Khan Tengri is the innumerable ice-lakes which they contain—funnel-shaped, and from 600 to 1,000 feet “large” (the author does not explain whether this means diameter or circumference)—whose origin is still to be explained.

A large-scale map and two beautiful mountain panoramas made of 8 x 10-inch plates are great helps to a proper appreciation of the text, and both text and illustrations make the reader look forward to the publication of the complete report, which is to follow upon this preliminary one.

M. K. G.

Reisen im westindischen Mittelmeer. Von Dr. Georg Wegener.
Berlin, 1904. Allgemeiner Verein für deutsche Litteratur.

The book is a collection of letters containing records of the author's travels in Central America, which were written originally for the “Tägliche Rundschau” at Berlin. While not claiming to be scientific (as shown by the choice of the publisher and by its origin), it belongs to the best that has been written in the line of light geographic literature, whose principal value consists in awakening the interest in geography among the wider reading public, and for being pleasant reading it is no less rich in reliable information about the places visited. The list of the latter comprises the island of St. Thomas, Martinique, and an ascent of Mont Pelé, together with an account of its eruption on March 26, 1903; Jamaica, the Colombian cities of Puerto Colombia, Barranquilla, and Cartagena, Panama and the Canal region, Costa Rica and its capital San José, and an ascent of the Costa Rican volcano Irazu. The author's well-known skill in portraying, in short sketches, the characteristic features of the countries and nations visited is entirely up to the mark of his former publications, and even the professional geographer who will spend an hour of leisure with him will not lay the book aside without feeling indebted to the author for some new sidelights on otherwise familiar subjects.

M. K. G.

Historic Highways of America. By Archer Butler Hulbert.
Vols. 8-16. The Arthur H. Clark Company, Cleveland.

Vols. 1-7 of this series were noticed in this BULLETIN, Vol. 36, page 54, 1904. The work is now complete, and calls for a reference to the remaining parts. Vol. 8